SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES LONDON

¶ By the King.

A Proclamation for reſtraint of killing, dreſsing, and eating of Fleſh in Lent, or on Fiſh dayes, appointed by the Law, to be hereafter ſtrictly obſerued by all ſorts of people.

WHereas diuers good Lawes and Statutes, haue heretofore, with great care and prouidence beene made and enacted for the due obſeruation of Lent, and other dayes appointed for Fiſhdayes, aſwell for the ſparing and increaſe of Fleſh victuall, as for the maintenance of the Nauie & Shipping of this Realme, by the encouragement of Fiſhermen to goe to the Seas for the taking of Fiſh; which Lawes, and politique Conſtitutions, haue from time to time been ſeconded and quickened by ſundry Proclamations, and other Actes and Ordinances of State in the times of Our Royall Predeceſſors; And whereas, notwithſtanding ſo many good prouiſions heretofore had and made in that kinde, wee haue obſerued, that the inordinate liberty vſually taken by all ſorts of people, to kil, dreſſe and eate Fleſh in the Lent ſeaſon, and on other dayes and times prohibited, is become ſo inueterate an euill, that it will require more then ordinary care to ſuppreſſe the ſame.

Wee therefore, much affecting the reformation of ſo great & growing an euill, which is ſo great an enemy to the plenty of this Our Kingdome, haue thought fit thus timely, (the better to take away all pretences of excuſe) to expreſſe Our ſelfe and Our Royall Commandement in this behalfe: Whereof without future declaration of Our pleaſure in this kinde, Wee ſhall expect, and doe require from all Our Subiects, that due notice be taken, and that a ſtrict and continued obedience and conformity be yeelded thereunto, both for the preſent, and in all ſucceeding times.

And therefore Wee doe ſtraitly charge and command all and euery perſon and perſons whatſoeuer, to whom it may appertaine, carefully to prouide and ſee, that theſe Orders following may be duely obſerued and put in execution, vpon paine of Our high diſpleaſure, and ſuch penalties, as by the Lawes of this Our Realme may be inflicted vpon the Offenders, for their contempt or neglect of Vs and Our Lawes, whereof wee ſhall ſhew Our ſelfe moſt ſenſible.

And firſt, whereas We find, that the chiefeſt cauſe of theſe diſorders hath growen from the Licences that haue been granted to Butchers, to kill and vtter Fleſh contrary to Law, And that by Our Lawes, no Maior, Juſtice of Peace, or other perſon of what degree or quality ſoeuer, can grant any Licence in this kinde; And that the Lords and others of Our Priuy Councell, doe by Our direction forbeare to grant the ſame, or giue way thereunto; Our Will and pleaſure is, vpon the penalties prouided by Law, and ſuch further puniſhment to be inflicted vpon the offenders, as ſhall be thought meete, that no ſuch Licence ſhall bee granted for the killing or vttering of Fleſh; And, that no Butcher, or other perſon whatſoeuer, doe by colour thereof, kill, vtter, or put to ſale any Fleſh contrary to the Lawes eſtabliſhed and prouided in that behalfe.

And for the auoiding of ſuch inconueniences hereafter, Our Will & pleaſure is, That the Lord Maior of Our Citie of London, and euery other Officer and Juſtice of Peace, ſhall call before them, and ſend for any of the ſeruants of any Inholders, Victualers, Cookes, Alehouſekeepers, Tauerners, and keepers of Ordinary tables, & ſuch others that vtter Victuals, & to examine them vpon their corporall Oathes, what Fleſh is, or hath been during the Lent ſeaſon, or other daies prohibited by the Law, dreſſed, killed, vttered, or eaten in their houſes, which if they ſhall refuſe to doe, then to commit to priſon the ſaid ſeruants ſo refuſing vpon their Oathes to declare the trueth.

That the Lord Maior shall also yeerely before Lent, or at the beginning thereof cause all Inholders, keepers of Ordinary tables, Victuallers, Alehouse-keepers, & Tauerners within the Citie and Liberties thereof, to appeare before him, or such persons as he shall appoint meet for that purpose; And shal take Recognizances with sufficient Sureties of euery of them in good summes of money, (viz.) One hundred pounds of the Principal, and their Sureties thirty pounds apiece, to Our vse, not to dresse any Flesh in their houses in the Lent time, or at other times prohibited, for any respect, nor suffer it to be eaten contrary to Law. The like Recognizance with Sureties, shal be taken of the like parties vpon like penalties, by the Justices of peace of Our City of Westminster, and the Liberties thereof, & euery of the said Recognizances to be certified into Our Exchequer.

And for the Butchers, and others that come with Victuall or Flesh out of the Countrey into the Citie, Our pleasure is, That the Lord Maior shall cause certaine persons to watch at the Gates and other like places in the Suburbs, where Flesh may be brought, to view & search, and to intercept the same: And if any of those watchmen shall be found negligent and corrupt in his Charge, then he to be committed to prison during the Whole Lent.

And to the end that Fishermen may imploy themselues to Sea with better incouragement then heretofore, and that the Fishmongers may furnish themselues with such store from time to time hereafter, as shall be expedient, aswell for the prouision of the City, as for selling the same at reasonable Rates; We will that they take notice of this Our Commandement, & constant resolution for obseruance of Lent, & Fish-dayes, both now and hereafter, as by Law is required.

And furthermore, as Wee thinke it fit, that euery man should be a rule of order and abstinence in his owne house, aswell in respect of the publique, as of his priuate ease and benefit: So We straitly charge and command all Inholders, keepers of Ordinary tables, Victuallers, Alehouse-keepers, and Tauerners, not to make any Supper for any person or persons whatsoeuer, vpon Friday nights, either in Lent or out of Lent; nor to suffer any meate to be then dressed, vttered, sold or eaten in their houses, vpon paine of such punishment, as is due to those that shall contemne Our Royall pleasure and Commandement.

And forasmuch as vpon further aduice and consideration had, that the restraint of killing and dressing of Flesh is no sufficient remedy for the mischiefe, vnlesse there be better care also taken to suppresse the vnlawfull and inordinate eating of Flesh in the time of Lent, and on other daies and times prohibited, wherwith Our Subiects haue accustomed themselues, rather for delicatie then for necessity; It is therefore Our Royall Will and pleasure, and accordingly We doe hereby straitly prohibit and forbid all Our Subiects, of what degree or quality soeuer within this Realme, to eate any maner of Flesh in ỹ time of Lent, or on other daies now vsually obserued as Fish-daies, without a speciall Licence first obtained from the Bishop of the Diocesse, or such other as by the Law haue power to giue Licence in that behalfe, and according to Our Lawes in that case prouided, (which We will and command shall be sparingly granted, and in cases of necessity onely) vpon paine of Our high displeasure, and to bee proceeded against by Our Attourney generall in Our Court of Star-Chamber as contemners of our Royall Commandement, and vpon such further penalties, as by the Lawes and Statutes of Our Realme may bee inflicted on those that shall wilfully offend in this kinde.

And as these Orders are to be executed in Our City of London, and places neere to the same, so it is Our expresse pleasure and Commandement, That Our Justices of Peace in all Shires within their Rule, & all other Maiors, Bailifes, and chiefe Officers in Townes Corporate, or in any Liberties within their Precincts, shal cause the same to be obserued and performed in like maner; and that no maner of Toleration, Fauour, or Conniuencie be vsed by any Justice of Peace, or other Officer, contrary to the true meaning of this Our Proclamation, as both they that shall presume wittingly so to tolerate the offence, as also the party himselfe offending, will answere the same at their vttermost perils: Our Commandement being, That Our Lawes in this case shalbe hereafter seuerely executed vpon all Offenders whatsoeuer:

Further charging and commanding the Lord Maior of Our City of London, the Justices of Assise in their seuerall Circuits, the Maiors and the chiefe Officers of all other Cities & Townes corporate, Justices of Peace, Lords of Liberties, and all other Officers and ministers within the seuerall Counties of this Our Realme, that they and euery of them fully obey this Our pleasure, and cause and compel the same to be obeyed and executed by others, as they will answere the contrary at their vttermost perils.

And for the due execution of the premisses in all other the Counties of this Our Realme, aswel as in Our Cities of London and Westminster, We doe hereby straitly charge and command all Our

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Iuſtices of Peace within the ſame Counties, aſwell within Liberties as without, That yeerely, and euery yeere hereafter before Lent, they cauſe to come and appeare before them, all Inholders, Cookes, Tauerners, Alehouſe-keepers, Butchers, & others Victuallers whatſoeuer, & to require and take of them to Our vſe, ſeuerall Recognizances, with Sureties, for obſeruation of the premiſſes, (viz.) The Principals in ten Pounds, and their two Sureties in fiue pounds apiece: And if they ſhall refuſe or neglect to enter into ſuch Recognizances, then the ſaid Iuſtices ſhall ſuppreſſe ſuch perſons ſo refuſing, from victualling any more, and ſhall alſo cauſe them forthwith to become bound by Recognizance with Sureties to Our vſe, (viz.) The Principals in twenty pounds, and their two Sureties in ten pounds apiece, not to victuall, or ſell Beere or Ale from thenceforth; which if they ſhall refuſe to doe, then the ſaid Iuſtices to commit to priſon all ſuch perſons ſo refuſing to enter into ſuch Recognizances, vntill they ſhall ſubmit themſelues, and become bound, as aforeſaid. And further, for all ſuch Inholders, Cookes, Tauerners, Alehouſe-keepers, Butchers and other Victuallers, as ſhall not appeare before the ſaid Iuſtices, as aforeſaid, That they may immediatly ſend forth their warrants, or grant Proceſſe againſt them, and euery of them ſo making default, to appeare and anſwere their contempt at the next generall Seſſions of the Peace.

And further, for the more due puniſhment of Inholders, keepers of Ordinary tables, Cookes, Butchers, Victuallers, Alehouſe-keepers, Tauerners, and ſuch like, Who ſhall forfeit their Recognizances by killing or dreſſing of Fleſh, or ſuffering it to be eaten in their houſes in the Lent time, and other Fiſh-dayes; And to the end that the ſame may be as well taken in due forme of Law, as duely certified into Our Exchequer, We doe Will and require all Iuſtices of Peace, aſwell within Liberties as without, That at ſuch times as they ſhall meete within their ſeuerall Diuiſions, for the taking of ſuch Recognizances, that they giue notice to the Clerkes of the Peace, or their deputies, to attend them for that purpoſe. Of whom We will require a ſtrict accompt for the Legall taking and returning of the ſame Recognizances into Our ſayd Exchequer: The ſaid Clerkes of the Peace and their Deputies, taking for the making and certifying of the ſame Recognizances of all Inkeepers, Tauerners, Cookes, and Butchers, the Fee of two ſhillings ſixe pence, and of all Alehouſe keepers the Fee of twelue pence, as is limited to be taken by the Clerke of the Peace for Our County of Middleſex for euery ſuch Recognizance, and no more.

And laſtly, for that the Fiſhmongers (vpon the obſeruation of the aforeſaid Orders) may perhaps take occaſion thereby, to inhance the prices, aſwel of Freſh, as of Sea-Fiſh, We doe therefore hereby further charge and command all Fiſhmongers whatſoeuer, That they ſell and vtter their Fiſh at moderate and vſuall rates and prices; And that all Iuſtices of Peace, Maiors, Bailiffes, and other our Officers, as well within Liberties as without, to whom it ſhall appertaine, ſhall from time to time take ſuch order with the ſaid Fiſhmongers, that Our Subiects be not grieued by any ſuch enhancement or increaſe of prices vpon Fiſh, vpon paine of Our high diſpleaſure, and ſuch further puniſhment as may be inflicted vpon them by Our Lawes.

Giuen at Our Court at White-Hall, the fourteenth day of Ianuary, in the firſt yeere of Our Reigne of Great Britaine, France and Ireland.

God ſaue the King.

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